

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A scalable method of ~~asseeiating~~ storing an annotation associated with a content source, the method comprising:

representing an annotation as an object having a plurality of properties wherein one of the plurality of properties is a document identifier property; ~~associating the annotation with a content source using the document identifier property wherein~~, the document identifier property ~~identifies~~ identifying the content source with which the annotation is associated; and

storing the annotation and information about the annotation accessible using the document identifier on at least an annotation server the servers of a multiple tier hierarchical annotation server system wherein each higher tier server includes more annotation information than the information about the annotation but not the annotation is stored on a lower tier servers server and the annotation is stored on a higher tier server.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the act of representing the annotation as an object having a plurality of properties further comprises defining generic properties of the annotation.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the generic properties are selected from the group consisting of: type, content, author name, creation time, modify time, time-to-live, document identifier, index and parent identifier.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the type property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a text file, a threaded message, an audio file, a video file, a calendar file, and a chat.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the act of representing the annotation as a object having a plurality of properties further comprises defining one or more type specific properties unique to the annotation.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the document identifier is selected from the group consisting of: a file name, a directory path, and a uniform resource locator.

7. (Currently amended) A scalable method of ~~presenting~~ retrieving an annotation associated with a content source, the method comprising:

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sending a document identifier ~~[[for]]~~ associated with a content source to a tier I server, said tier I server being part of a multiple tier hierarchical annotation server system that also includes a tier II server, said tier I server storing minimal information regarding annotations associated with said content source, said minimal information including the existence of annotations associated with said content source and the identification of said tier II server if said annotations exist; and

~~receiving a first response from the tier I server, said first response comprising an indication of whether an annotation is associated with the document identifier and, if an annotation is associated with the document identifier, receiving a reference from said tier I server to said tier II server, said tier II server maintaining additional information regarding the annotation associated with the document identifier.~~

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying the first response in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying the first response in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 7, wherein said multiple tier hierarchical annotation server system also includes a tier III server and further comprising:

sending a request to the tier II server for said additional information regarding the annotation associated with the content source; and

receiving a ~~second~~ response from the tier II server, said ~~second~~ response ~~comprising at least one property of the annotation and including~~ a reference to said tier III server, said tier III server ~~providing~~ storing the annotation associated with the document identifier.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein said response from said tier II server also includes at least one property of the annotation, further comprising displaying the at least one property of the annotation in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein said response from said tier II server also includes at least one property of the annotation, further comprising displaying the at least one property of the annotation in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

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sending to the tier III server an annotation identifier that identifies the annotation associated with the content source; and

receiving a third response from the tier III server, wherein the third response comprises a ~~body for~~ the annotation identified by the annotation identifier.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising displaying ~~the body for~~ the annotation identified by the annotation identifier in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising displaying ~~the body for~~ the annotation identified by the annotation identifier in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

16. (Currently amended) A computer readable medium comprising computer executable steps for executing a scalable method for ~~associating~~ storing an annotation associated with a content source, the method comprising:

representing an annotation as an object having a plurality of properties wherein one of the plurality of properties is a document identifier property; ~~associating the annotation with a content source using the document identifier property~~, said document identifier property identifying the content source with which the annotation is associated; and

storing said annotation and information about the annotation accessible using the document identifier on at least one annotation server the servers of a multiple tier hierarchical annotation server system wherein each higher tier server includes more annotation information than the information about the annotation but not the annotation is stored on a lower tier servers server, and the annotation is stored on a higher tier server.

17. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the plurality of properties are selected from the group consisting of: type, content, author name, creation time, modify time, time-to-live, document identifier, index, and parent identifier.

18. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the type property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a text file, a threaded message, an audio file, a video file, a calendar file, and a chat.

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19. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the document identifier property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a file name, a directory path, and a uniform resource locator.

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